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ABSTRACT

This progress report analyzes the outcomes of the Running Start Program, part of Washington's 1990 "Learning by Choice Law," which was designed to expand educational options for high school students. The program qualified high school juniors and seniors to take college-level classes at the state's community and technical colleges and earn credit concurrently in college and high school. The report finds that the GPA for Running Start students in two-year institutions was about 3.12, while the average for all two-year students was 2.99. The demographic statistics for Running Start for fall 1999 were as follows: (1) 59% female; (2) 15% ethnic minorities; (3) 2% were students with disabilities; and (4) 42% of the students worked part time and 1% worked full time. The University of Washington reported that Running Start students who transferred to the university: (1) achieved a GPA of 3.0, the same as entering freshmen; (2) 86% of the Running Start students continued at the university the following year; (3) 41% of the Running Start students who entered the university in 1993 graduated within 4 years, compared with 31% for regular students; and (4) Running Start students who entered the university in 1993 graduated with a GPA of 3.4, compared with a GPA of 3.1 for regular freshmen. (NB)

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ED 457 888

RUNNING START

1999-2000
Annual Progress Report
State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

OCTOBER 2000

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For Additional Information Contact:
Sally Zeiger Hanson
State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
P O Box 42495
319 7th Avenue
Olympia WA 98504-2495
360-753-3672
shanson@sbctc.ctc.edu

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THE RUNNING START PROGRAM

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT
1999-2000

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RUNNNING START

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT
1999-2000

SUMMARY

In 1999-2000 the Running Start Program experienced its tenth year as a successful and popular program for eligible high school juniors and seniors. Growth in enrollment continued at a moderate rate, consistent with the overall growth of the total number of students in the eleventh and twelfth grades of high school and at a declining rate from previous years. In 1999-2000, 13,276 (7,767 FTE) students enrolled. This was a growth of about 7 percent from the previous year enrollment of 12,355 (6585 FTE). After ten years, the program has matured and now is approaching a growth rate very similar to increases in the general high school population.

The high schools of the state continue to provide excellent preparation for students who are entering the Running Start program at the community or technical colleges, and the universities that offer the program.

Running Start students continued to perform well in the two-year colleges and after transferring to the universities. The grade point average for all Running Start students in two year institutions is about 3.12 with all regular two-year students averaging 2.99. In 1999-2000, after transfer to the University of Washington, students continued with solid performance averaging a GPA of 3.09, about the same as native freshmen entering the University.

BACKGROUND

The 1990 Legislature created the Running Start program as a part of the "Learning by Choice" law, which was designed to expand educational options for high school students. The Running Start law allows qualified eleventh and twelfth grade students to take college level courses at the 34 community and technical colleges. Running Start students earn both high school and college credits for completing courses at the college level. The 1994 Legislature expanded the program to include Eastern, Central, and Washington State Universities. The intention of the legislature was to provide Running Start program access in the local communities served by these universities where no two-year colleges were available to directly serve students.

To initiate the program in 1990, the Legislature authorized a two-year pilot program. Five community colleges were selected to participate during the 1990-92 academic year (Everett, Pierce, Skagit Valley, South Puget Sound, and Walla Walla community colleges). The pilot program involved 37 high schools within the college service areas. Program enrollments for the first year were 358 students. The program began statewide in 1992-93, when about 3,350 students enrolled at the community and technical colleges.

RUNNING START PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Running Start presents a challenging option for qualified students who may perform better in a college setting than in a traditional high school, and students continue to report that taking classes with regular college students and adults offers a new and challenging experience to learning. Eleventh and twelfth grade students, as defined by the high school and who are qualified for

admission as determined by the higher education institutions, may attend community and technical colleges and three public universities free of tuition. However, they must provide their own transportation, books, and consumable materials. By allowing students to obtain high school and college credit simultaneously, Running Start reduces the amount of time students spend in school and reduces college costs for students and their families. The dual credit nature of the program allows the student to complete four years of education while attending two years. This also allows savings to the State and the students parents in reduction of tuition.

Program Finance and Savings to the State and Taxpayers.

For the 1999-2000 academic year, colleges were reimbursed at statewide uniform rates by the K-12 districts whose students participate in Running Start. Colleges received a statewide standard rate of about $81 per credit for academic programs, and $97 per credit for vocational programs. K-12 districts retain seven percent of the state funds for counseling and overhead. During the pilot program years, reimbursement rates varied by school district according to the rate of reimbursement from the Superintendent of Public Instruction. This was modified in 1992-93 to reimburse colleges at the statewide average for all school districts to simplify accounting procedures.

By allowing the student to earn credit for high school and college simultaneously, dual credit also allows the state to save up to two full years of state funding for students enrolled. In 1999-2000, the total savings from the Running Start Program is estimated at $37.12 million to the taxpayers and parents in the state. Considering 7299 FTE students for 1999-2000, the program saved Washington State taxpayers $24.6 million because of the dual credit that students earned for participating in the program. Parents and students also saved approximately $12.5 million in tuition. In 1999-2000.

Flexibility in scheduling allows Running Start students to meet other commitments for education, jobs, or family responsibilities. For fall 1999, 43 percent of the students worked part time and 1 percent worked full time.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RUNNING START STUDENTS -- FALL 1999

Running Start students for fall 1999, as a group, are very similar to previous years in demographic characteristics.

- 59 percent of the students were female.
- Over 15 percent were students of color.
- The average credit load taken by the students was 9-11 credits per quarter. 51 percent took 10 or more credits during fall 1998, but many students take one five credit course per quarter at college with the balance of classes taken in high school.
- 2 percent were students with disabilities.
- 42 percent of the students worked part time, and 1 percent worked full time.
- Approximately 80 percent of the students were enrolled in academic courses.

STUDENT SUCCESS AND TRANSFER OUTCOME MEASURES

- The average grade point of Running Start students enrolled in community and technical colleges in 1999-2000 was 3.11. This is slightly above the average entering two year college freshman grade point average of 2.98

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON FOLLOW-UP RESEARCH

The University of Washington reports the following information concerning Running Start students who have transferred to the university.

Fall Quarter, 1999, Running Start Admissions.

- For fall quarter 1999, preliminary data shows 511 Running Start students were admitted. 256 were female (50.1 percent).
- There were 163 (32 percent) Running Start transfer students of color who entered UW in Fall 1999.
- 45 students entered with junior standing, 47 as sophomores, and 419 entered as freshmen.

Continuing Running Start student performance at the University.

- Program students achieved a grade point of 3.09, the same as entering as a freshmen at the University of Washington.
- The students also took about the same credit load, although slightly less than regular freshmen.
- 86.2 per cent of the students continued from the previous year taking an average of 14.3 credits.

Bachelors Degree Graduation Rates for Running Start Students.

- In fall quarter 1993, 88 Running Start students entered the university. Of these entering students, 40.9 percent (36 students) graduated in four years. This graduation rate compares favorably to the 31 percent of regular students who entered and completed their bachelor's degree during the same time period.
- Grade point averages also compare favorably. Running Start students graduated with a GPA of 3.42 as compared to the regular entering freshman students graduating GPA of 3.14.
- The University is currently researching degree completion rates for 1994 and 1995.

1998-99 NEW ISSUES

Currently there is no budget support for students enrolled at the Washington School for the Blind, or the Washington School for the Deaf to participate in the Running Start Program. Because the institutions are funded directly from the Governor's budget, students from these schools are not funded for Running Start enrollment at the colleges and universities. Although an attempt was made during the 1999 legislative session to receive funding, the request was not approved. The estimated cost per student is $15,000 per year to include state basic education monies and to pay for accommodations such as interpreters, Braille books and equipment. This is a continuing issue that needs resolution by the legislature.

OTHER PROGRAM COMMENTS

Considering research, surveys, and quarterly meetings of community-technical colleges, universities and high schools involved in Running Start, the following information is provided.

A 1999-2000 study by the University of Washington's Center for the Study of Capable Youth, concluded that:

> 'Students, on the whole seem very satisfied with the Running Start program and, more importantly for our purposes, satisfied with their own preparation for and progress in that program .....For them, community college provided just the kind of learning environment that they had been craving."

The above recent report confirms that the program is well-received by students and parents, as originally found in the 1992 State Board for Community and Technical College research study.

Counseling time and costs are substantially more than the cost for regular students, especially in high schools. The funding formula for the program does not recognize this extra counseling workload in Running Start an other dual credit programs. Additional resources in these areas would provide increased cooperation from the high schools and insure the future success of students and the growth of the program, including savings to the state and it's taxpayers.needs to be modified by the legislature to recognize the full costs of the program.

SUGGESTED PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS AND RELATED ISSUES

High schools that are the most heavily impacted by loss of students who are choosing Running Start, report that local high school advanced placement programs are being diminished by the lower number of students participating. This results in fewer options for students who decide to stay full-time at the high school. Some high schools report that they are considering discontinuing their advanced placement programs because of the high per-student-cost of offering the program to the students who chose to remain.

In addition, the high cost and time spent in counseling Running Start students is not being addressed by the overhead costs retained by the school districts. The dual enrollment nature of Running Start requires intensive counseling by high school and college staff to assure testing, placement, and the selection of courses that will meet high school diploma and college degree requirements at the same time. Successful counseling and advising is the key element in student success and the impact on the overall Running Start Program.

These unintended consequences limit full endorsement of the program by the K-12 system. In order to maintain comprehensive high school programs, additional resources are needed. The request for additional program funds to address the above deficiencies is strongly supported by the high school and community and technical college systems.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Running Start continues to be an excellent program option for qualified high school juniors and seniors, but is not funded at a level to recognize the actual cost of the program. Parents and students strongly support the program because it expands their educational choices while reducing the time required to complete their education and tuition costs. Many students report that the program offers an additional educational challenge by allowing them to participate in the same classes and learning atmosphere as regular college and adult students. Washington State benefits from the savings in state aid because of the dual credit awarded to students. Colleges and the University of Washington report that Running Start student performance is at least equal to the performance of other entry-level freshmen as measured by grade point averages.

The program would be more significantly accepted by high schools and improved if additional funding was made available to offset the additional counseling demands and the loss of comprehensive programs at the high schools impacted by the program.

Additional funding is also needed to serve the High Schools for the Blind and the Deaf to provide equal access for students in these institutions.

END
NARRATIVE REPORT

Please see the Appendix for further information.

RUNNING START ENROLLMENTS
Fiscal Year 1998-99

College	Headcount	FTEs
Bates	134	160
Bellevue	553	349
Bellingham	101	72
Big Bend	153	80
Cascadia	0	0
Centralia	221	153
Clark	711	350
Clover Park	115	109
Columbia Basin	443	311
Edmonds	539	293
Everett	523	339
Grays Harbor	134	75
Green River	710	444
Highline	525	315
Lake Washington	23	10
Lower Columbia	322	176
Olympic	378	257
Peninsula	351	248
Pierce	600	338
Renton	92	48
Seattle Central	578	287
Seattle North	270	129
Seattle South	280	131
Seattle Voc Institute	0	0
Shoreline	328	186
Skagit Valley	747	384
South Puget Sound	590	288
Spokane	258	163
Spokane Falls	586	352
Tacoma	544	311
Walla Walla	300	136
Wenatchee Valley	297	192
Whatcom	696	355
Yakima Valley	446	260
TOTAL	12,548	7,301

Source: SBCTC MIS Report SR3105.

Statewide unduplicated total enrollment was 12,355.
A few Running Start students took courses at more than one college.

Running Start
Transfer Performance
at
University of Washington

Compiled by
John F. Swiney
University of Washington

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
RUNNING START PERFORMANCE
FALL 1993

Students	88
Average Transfer Credits	24
First Year Return	87.5%
Average Quarter Credits	14.1
Average Comp. Credits	12.8
Average Quarter Enrolled	10.2
Average UW Quarter GPA	3.1
Percent Graduated (1997)	40.9
Percent Attrited	23.9
Percent Still Enrolled	35.2
Average UW Credits	166.3
Average Total Credits	200.5
Average GEI	87.8

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
RUNNING START STUDENTS ENTERING
FALL 1993

Gender

Male	42	47.2%
Female	47	52.8%
TOTAL	89	(2 withdrew)

College Class (AA Degree = 1

Freshman	9	10.1%
Sophomore	67	75.3%
Junior	11	12.4%
Senior	2	2.2%

Students of Color

Black/African American	0	
Native American	0	
Asian-American	18	20.2%
Hispanic	4	4.5%
TOTAL	22	24.7%

Largest Feeder High Schools

Kentridge	5
Lynnwood	5
Auburn	3
Bellevue	3
Port Angeles	3
Rainier Beach	3

Largest Feeder Community Colleges

Edmonds	9
Green River	8
Bellevue	6
Pierce	6
Seattle Central	5
Clark	4
Everett	4
Grays Harbor	4
Highline	4
Shoreline	4
Spokane	4

FIRST YEAR PERFORMANCE
RUNNING START STUDENTS ENTERING
FALL 1993

Entering Characteristics

High School GPA	3.68
SAT TOTAL	
Mean	1126
Range	650 - 1520
SAT Verbal	
Mean	527.8
Range	300 - 750
SAT Math	
Mean	598.7
Range	350 - 770
ACT	
Mean	26.5 (1090 - 1130 SAT)
Range	21 - 32 (800 - 1350 SAT)

2-Year Transfer Credits

Mean	25.2
Range	5 - 90

UW Performance

GPA	Fall 93	Winter 94	Spring 94
RST	3.07	3.12	3.13
Freshman	3.04	3.02	3.01
Community College	3.07	3.11	3.13
Credits			
RST	15.3	15.0	15.0
All Freshman	14.0	14.0	13.7
Community College	11.5	11.4	11.3

Continuation Rate

RST 87.5% enrolled FALL 1994 for 14.6 average credit load

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
RUNNING START STUDENTS
ENTERING FALL 1998

Number of Students	540	
Gender		
Male	261	48.3%
Female	279	51.7%
Entering College Class		
Freshman	506	93.7%
Sophomore	17	3.1%
Junior	17	3.1%
Ethnic Distribution		
African-American	8	1.5%
Asian-American	148	27.4%
Hispanic	22	4.1%
Native American	7	1.3%
White	296	54.8%
Other	59	10.9%
High School GPA		
Mean	3.67	
Range	2.85 – 4.00	
SAT Verbal		
Mean	3582	
Range	2.50 – 8.00	
SAT Math		
Mean	600	
Range	330 – 800	
SAT Total		
Mean	1,182	
Range	580 – 1,520	

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
RUNNING START STUDENTS
ENTERING FALL 1998

ACT Score	
Mean	25
Range	15 – 33
Entering Transfer Credits	
Mean	43
Range	1 – 92
AA Degrees	26
Largest Feeder High Schools	
Roosevelt	18
Mountlake Terrace	13
Capital (tie)	11
Garfield (tie)	11
Issaquah	10
Sehome (tie)	9
Nathan Hale (tie)	9
Kentwood (tie)	9
Largest Feeder Community Colleges	
Bellevue	41
North Seattle	30
Green River	29
Clark (tie)	27
Edmonds (tie)	27
Ft. Steilacoom (tie)	24
Shoreline (tie)	24
Seattle Central (tie)	24

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
RUNNING START STUDENTS
ENTERING FALL 1998

UW Performance

	Fall 98	Winter 99	Spring 99
GPA			
Running Start	3.08	3.04	3.09
Freshman	3.06	3.04	3.09
Community College	3.10	3.11	3.15
Credits Earned			
Running Start	13.6	13.5	13.3
Freshman	14.4	14.0	13.9

Continuation Rate

Running Start	86.2% enrolled FALL 1999 for 14.3 average credit load

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
RUNNING START STUDENTS ENTERING
FALL 1999

PRELIMINARY DATA

Number of Students	511	
Gender		
Male	255	49.9%
Female	256	50.1%
Entering College Class		
Freshman	419	82.0%
Sophomore	47	9.2%
Junior	45	8.8%
Ethnic Distribution		
African-American	8	1.6%
Asian-American	131	25.6%
Hispanic	17	3.3%
Native American	7	1.4%
White	277	54.2%
Other	71	13.9%
High School GPA		
Mean	3.69	
Range	2.52 – 4.00	
SAT Verbal		
Mean	589	
Range	300 – 800	
SAT Math		
Mean	606	
Range	340 – 800	
SAT Total		
Mean	1,195	
Range	650 – 1,600	